

Briefing Note – Camden City School District Budget

March 2019

From: Acting State Superintendent Katrina McCombs, Camden City School District

Background: At the time of the state's intervention in 2013, one in five students Camden City School District dropped out before graduation, and 23 of the 26 schools were in the bottom 5% of the State. The District's QSAC scores were failing, and the graduation rate was 49%. Students were attending school in outdated facilities, with half of the District's buildings constructed before 1928, and many falling into disrepair.

In the first year of state control, the District faced a \$113m budget shortfall. Since then, the District has found efficiencies by reducing the size of its Central Office, modernizing systems, and partnering with high performing renaissance school operators to make significant investment in its most failing school buildings.

Today, the District is poised for a return to local control. Its 2018 QSAC scores show progress in four of five indicators, and three indicators are above the 80% threshold.

However, without continued financial support from the State, the District will not be able to sustain its progress, and will fall backwards in student achievement and the path to local control. With emergency aid and facilities bond support, the District will have the time and resources needed to implement a long-term plan to right size its school portfolio and create a fiscally responsible, locally controlled system of public schools, as well as to ensure school buildings are adequate for educating students.

Budget Summary: With prior reliance on one-time funding streams, Camden City School District could face a **budgetary crisis** if state aid remains flat and does not secure facilities funding. The district has a **\$26.7m** shortfall (created by a loss of \$15.1m in revenues and \$11.6m in increased costs) represents **15%** of the District's operating budget, and would have **severe and lasting effects on Camden's traditional public schools** and the **7,360 students** who rely on them for a thorough and efficient education.

The District is taking aggressive action to reduce administrative costs and achieve savings in schools (through measures like significant transportation cut backs, portfolio reconfiguration, enrollment based layoffs, and recovering tuition credits). Without additional State aid, the only viable option to bridge the remaining gap will require **\$26.7 million in cuts to schools**, including:

- Cutting **300+** school based staff (a **20%** reduction in the total workforce), including many of our best educators and residents of the City
- Increasing class sizes above regulated and educationally appropriate levels
- **Eliminating the additional instructional supports** driving a 20 point rise in graduation rate and annual reading and math proficiency gains
- Eliminating summer program and making further cuts afterschool programming, athletics, and extracurriculars
- Reduction of district-wide service in facilities maintenance and compliance
- **6-7 school closures** – reducing the District by 1/3

In past years, the district had a \$20m budget gap annually it was able to bridge using one time funding sources that are no longer available at these levels:

- Reduction in Central Office Staff (*330 positions in 2013 to 110 in 2019*)
- Asset and Building Sales
- Fund Balance
- Federal Grant Funds Carry Over
- Tightening Payroll and Fiscal Controls
- Cuts to Non-essential School Activities
- Renaissance school transformations
- State Emergency aid



CAMDEN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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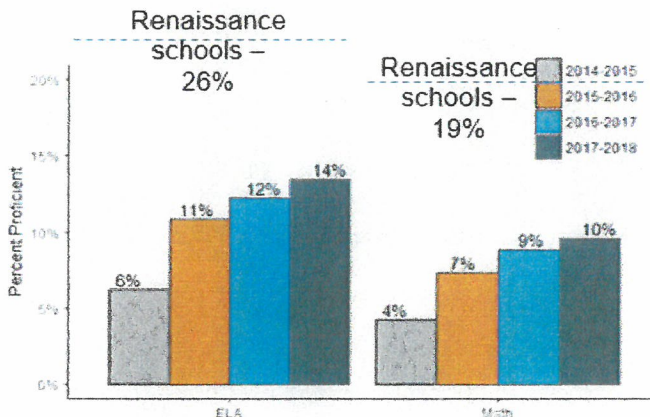
MARCH 2019 UPDATES- ENGAGEMENT FOR BUDGET PLANNING SY19-20

- **Progress of Camden Students**
- **Long-term planning for student success**
 - SY19-20 Budget Planning
 - Investing in Capital Improvements
 - Immediate Actions

Putting Students First: Camden City School District Strategic Plan

- 1** Accelerate reading and math achievement
- 2** Great teachers in every classroom
- 3** Safe schools built for 21st century success
- 4** A District that *puts students first*

Doubled reading and math proficiency in 4 years



Graduation rate up 20 points since State intervention



Excellent classroom instruction

1:1 weekly teacher coaching
Investment in school leadership capacity



Reading & math interventions

Every 1st – 10th grade student

Climate and culture overhaul

using a case management, restorative approach

Wrap around programming

(all day summer program, after-school supports, sports, and extracurricular activities)



Camden Public Schools



@CamdenSchools



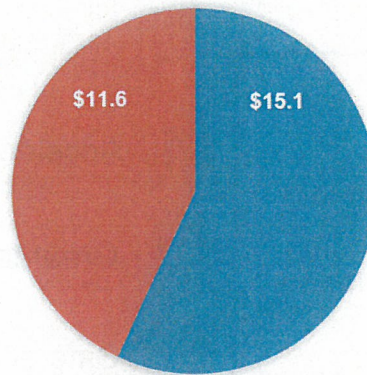
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Long-term planning for student success

FY20 BUDGET GAP

\$26.7M

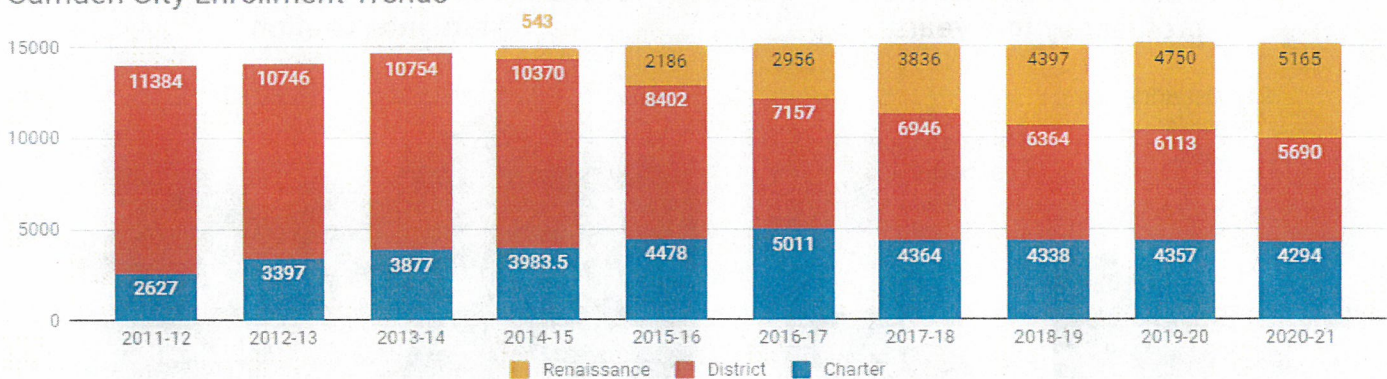
Increased costs
(wages, benefits,
tuition,
transportation)



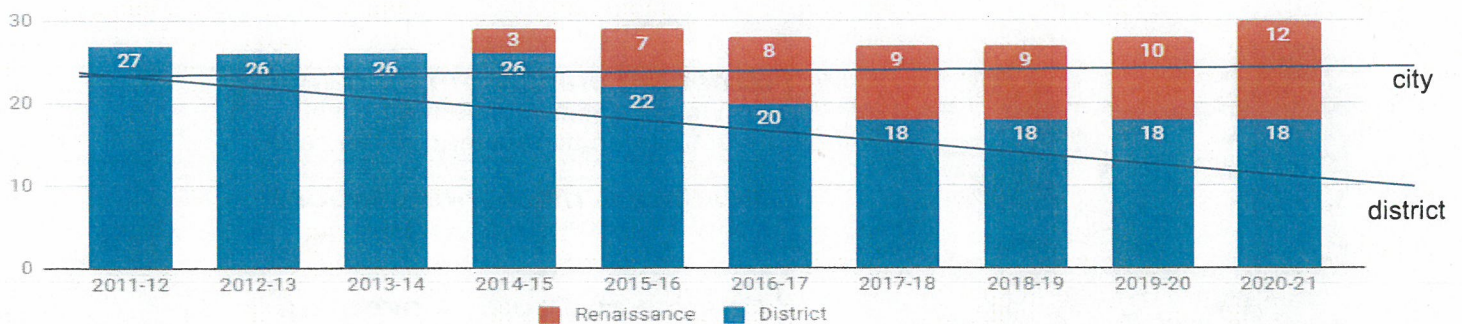
Reduction in funding
(emergency aid, fund
balance, carry over,
sale of assets, CO
staff cuts)

In past years, we used one time revenue sources to close the budget gap.
These sources are no longer available.

Camden City Enrollment Trends



School Buildings compared to enrollment



FAQ for Non-Affiliated Staff

My school is closing in June. Where will I work during the 2019-20 school year?

We plan to relocate as many staff members as possible to schools where there are available positions with job requirements that match such staff members' experiences.

Will my position be eliminated because my school is closing?

Your service to Camden City School District is valuable to our students and families. While our goal is to retain as many staff as possible, we anticipate making the hard choice of reducing positions to meet budgetary constraints. It is possible that your position will be eliminated--- not because your school is closing—but as a result of a larger reduction-in-force across the District.

If necessary, the District will implement a reduction in force in accordance with legal standards. The fact that your school is closing does not increase or decrease the chances of your position being eliminated. All staff members, including those serving at closing schools, will receive notice of their 19/20 employment status by May 15th, per state law. Seniority lists will be released to union leadership by May 15th.

If my employment will continue in the 2019-20 school year, when will I know my new school placement? Will you consider my preferences when determining placement?

Yes, we will consider your preferences when determining your new placement. We will do this by (1) collecting placement preferences from impacted staff members and (2) using these preferences to inform initial placement. Here is the timeline for sharing placement preferences.

| Date | Action Steps |
|----------------------|--|
| April 12th | Impacted staff receive a Staffing Survey. The survey will collect information on placement preferences and employment history so that, when making placement decisions, the District can prioritize staff members whose schools have closed. |
| April 22nd | Impacted staff complete the Staffing Survey. |
| May 15 th | All District staff, including impacted staff, receive notification about whether their employment will continue, per N.J.S.A. |
| Late May | All returning staff members receive notification of preliminary placements for 2019-20 school year. |
| August 15th | Returning staff members receive notification of final placement for 2019-20 school year. |

FAQ for Affiliated Staff

My school is closing in June. Where will I work during the 2019-20 school year?

We plan to relocate as many staff members from closing schools as possible to schools where (1) their current students are likely to enroll; and (2) there are available positions with job requirements and students' needs that match such staff member's certification and experience (if applicable).

Will my position be eliminated because my school is closing?

Your service to Camden City School District is valuable to our students and families. While our goal is to retain as many staff as possible, we anticipate making the hard choice of reducing positions to meet budgetary constraints. It is possible that your position will be eliminated--- not because your school is closing—but as a result of a larger reduction-in-force across the District.

If necessary, the District will implement a reduction in force in accordance with legal standards, which requires us to reduce staff based on seniority. The fact that your school is closing does not increase the chances of your position being eliminated. All staff members, including those serving at closing schools, will receive notice of their 19/20 employment status by May 15th, per state law. Seniority lists will be released to union leadership by May 15th.

If my employment will continue in 2019-20, when will I know my new school placement? Will you consider my preferences when determining placement?

Yes, we will consider your preferences when determining your new placement. We will also consider certification, availability of positions, student needs and grade-level experience (if applicable).

When determining placements, we will prioritize returning staff members who served at closing schools. We will do this by (1) collecting placement preferences from impacted staff members six weeks before the normal transfer process begins and (2) using these preferences to inform initial placement. If you don't like your initial placement, then you can participate in our normal transfer process in May/June.

Here is the timeline for sharing placement preferences and participating in the transfer process.

| Date | Action Steps |
|----------------------|---|
| April 12th | Impacted certificated staff receive a Staffing Survey. The survey will collect information on placement preferences and employment history so that, when making placement decisions, the District can prioritize staff members whose schools have closed. |
| April 22nd | Impacted staff complete the Staffing Survey. |
| May 15 th | All District staff, including impacted certificated staff, receive notification about whether their employment will continue, per N.J.S.A. |
| Late May | All returning certificated staff members receive notification of preliminary placements for 2019-20 school year. |
| Late May-Late June | The standard transfer process starts. All returning staff members can request a transfer during this time period. |
| August 15th | Returning staff members receive notification of final placement for 2019-20 school year. |

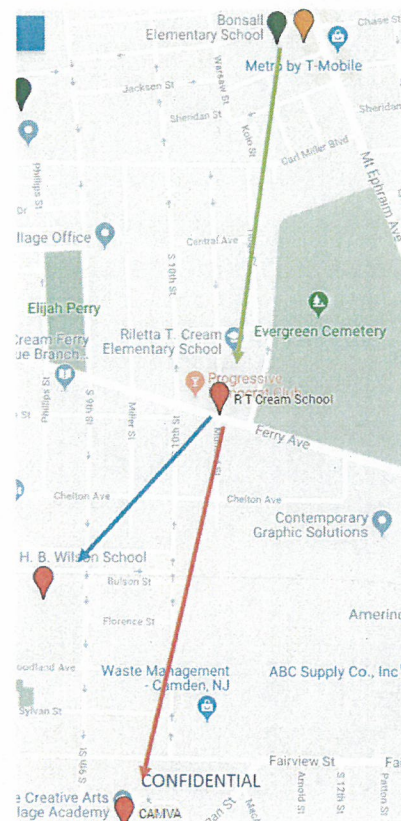
ECE: Cream & Bonsall Annex & ECDC

Open ECE Center @ Cream in 2019 and send students to new neighborhood schools

- 12 PreK classes in Cream
- Consolidate Cream K-8 into other schools:
 - K-5 into **HB Wilson** (K-8)
 - 6-8 into **CAMVA** (6-12: magnet + neighborhood)
- Close Bonsall Annex:
 - 5 PK @ Bonsall into **Cream**

ECDC will also focus on PreK only in 2019

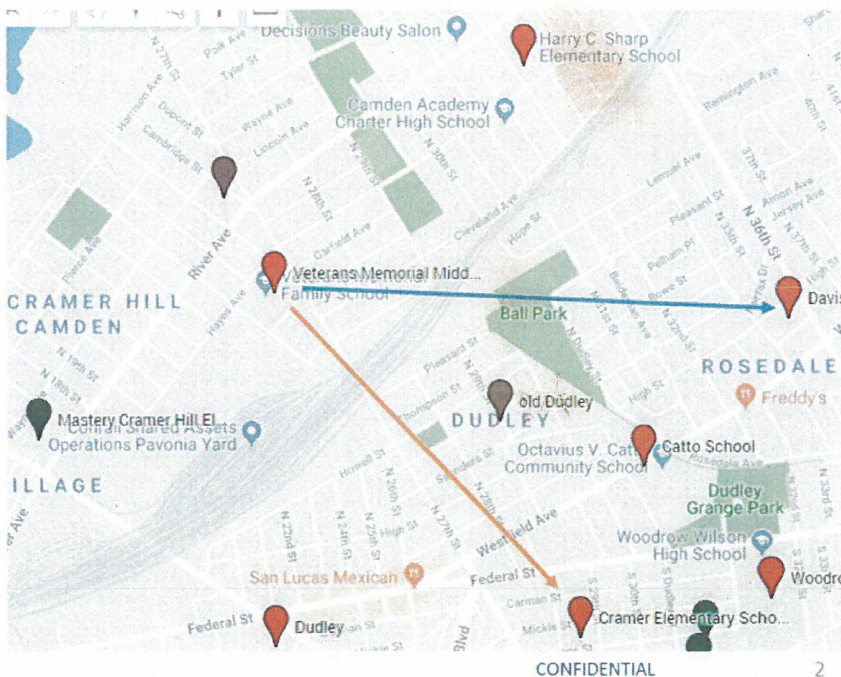
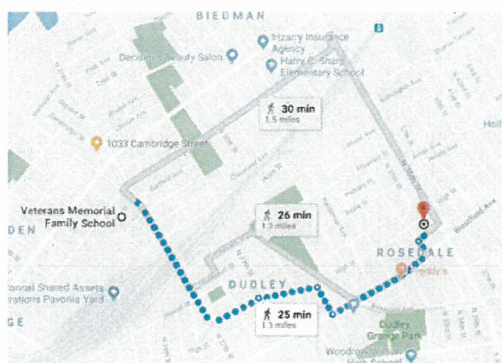
- K will move into neighborhood schools



1

Veterans

- Close in 2019 and send students to new neighborhood schools
 - Gen Ed K-8 moves to **Davis**
 - Bilingual 6-8 moves to **Cramer**
- **Cramer** begins development for a dual language academy K-8



2